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AUTHOR Pence, L. Jean
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ABSTRACT

Anticipating a 50 percent turnover of principals in the next few years, school districts and university training programs are exploring mentoring as one way to help aspiring and beginning principals learn complex administrative tasks and ease into their roles. This monograph highlights some formal administrator mentorship programs in Oregon. Chapter 1 provides an overview of formal and informal mentorships and discusses how they might benefit participants being trained and socialized into school organizations. Chapter 2 presents some examples of formal programs instituted by school districts--notably David Douglas, Tigard, North Clackamas, and West Linn. Chapter 3 focuses on formal mentorship programs sponsored by the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators. The final chapter offers suggestions about structuring formal mentorships to ensure that participants receive optimal benefit from the relationship. Successful programs (1) establish a plan; (2) develop goals and objectives; (3) identify mentors and proteges; (4) conduct an orientation for these groups; (5) provide resources (staff and compensation); and (6) develop a feedback/monitoring system. Included are a bibliography of 37 references and a list of 28 interviews. (MLH)

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MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS FOR ASPIRING AND NEW SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

L. Jean Pence

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Preface

Recent educational reform movements emphasize the influence school administrators, particularly principals, have on improving schools. Anticipating a 50 percent turnover of principals in the next few years, school districts and university training programs are exploring ways to help aspiring and beginning principals more easily learn complex administrative tasks.

Mentorship is one of the concepts being considered to help ease new administrators into their jobs. For many years, having a mentor has been an accepted way to help inexperienced managers in business learn a job and move into higher level positions. Mentorships can help school administrators learn their myriad of tasks—from bus schedules to district politics. The mentor relationship—a type of apprenticeship—gives new school administrators an opportunity to work with veteran school administrators. Those administrators who have had mentors report that they learned their jobs more easily with their mentors' help and support. Mentors, as well as proteges, report benefits from their relationships. Articulating educational philosophy, solving problems, and discussing issues help both mentors and proteges become better administrators.

In an effort to ensure support and guidance for aspiring and newly hired administrators, some school districts and professional organizations are implementing formal mentorship programs. This Bulletin presents recent research on mentorships and explains several mentorship programs implemented in Oregon that are helping school administrators "make sense" of their jobs.

The author, L. Jean Pence, is a graduate research assistant working with the Field-based Internship for Principal Preparation and Certification (FIPP-C) program. Pence has been a high school assistant principal for the last four years and is currently a doctoral candidate in the Division of

Educational Policy and Management at the University of Oregon. Pence's doctoral dissertation will focus on the characteristics of formal and informal mentor relationships for administrators.

Philip K. Piele
Executive Secretary

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Introduction

Being an administrator is analogous to being
a Maytag repair man.
"He [or she] is the loneliest man in town."

Most university educational administration training programs do not adequately prepare aspiring school administrators for the multifaceted responsibilities they will face on the job; nor should they be expected to do so. Traditionally, administration programs are steeped in theory with a smattering of field experiences. In business, medicine, and other professions, apprenticeships have long been an accepted method of learning a new job . To that end, many educational administration training programs include a practica or internship; however, many practitioners report that they need more help than that to ease their transition into administrative roles (Daresh 1987a and b, Peterson 1985). In *Leaders for America's Schools* (1987), the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (NCEEA) called for a redefinition of educational leadership and recommended that administrative preparation programs "provide a strong intellectual background in education and organizational life and build on that, guiding administrative candidates through closely mentored practice to independent action" (Forsyth 1987).

Current educational literature is filled with the notion that mentorships are a good way to provide a quicker and smoother transition into complex educational administrative roles. Some educational leaders believe that mentorships are an excellent way to help aspiring and newly hired school administrators become better prepared for and understand their jobs. Common characteristics of successful mentor relationships can be identified and used as a framework to develop formally organized mentorship programs for preparing and socializing school administrators.

Nearly 50 percent of Oregon's administrators are nearing retirement or are retiring early, according to Wayne Robbins, associate executive director

of the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators. The increased demand for new administrators, particularly principals, may result in greater attention on recruiting and preparing administrative aspirants. This Bulletin highlights some formal mentorship programs in Oregon designed to assist aspirants and neophyte administrators learn their new duties.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the nature of informal and formal mentorships and discusses how they might benefit participants who are being trained and socialized into a school organization. Chapter 2 presents some examples of formal programs that school districts have instituted—notably David Douglas, Tigard, North Clackamas, and West Linn. Chapter 3 focuses on formal mentorship programs that are sponsored by the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators. The final chapter offers suggestions about structuring formal mentorships to ensure that participants receive optimum benefit from the relationship.

Chapter 1

The Meaning and Benefits of Mentorship

WANTED IMMEDIATELY: Successful, powerful mentor
to take willing protege under his/her wing, teach ropes,
open doors, provide unfailing encouragement.
Fee generous. (Phillips-Jones, 1982, 15)

Informal mentor relationships have existed for many years and have helped men advance in their careers. Concern about promoting women into administrative careers has generated additional research on mentorship. This chapter presents a summary of research conducted in business organizations on mentor relationships. These studies suggest that adult development and career development are the basis upon which successful mentorships flourish. Since mentor relationships can help socialize new administrators into an organization, an overview of formal mentorships along with some of the advantages and disadvantages of formal mentorship programs is provided.

What Is a Mentorship?

Mentorship, like leadership, is an illusive beast to capture and define. Often described as unique relationships involving unique individuals, *mentorship* is an ancient concept believed to have received its name from Homer's epic *The Odyssey*; Ulysses chose his wise and trusted old friend, Mentor, to guard and guide his son, Telemachus. Since that time, historians have documented many mentor relationships. For example, Thomas A. Scott was a mentor to Andrew Carnegie, Franz Boas was a mentor to Margaret Mead, and Dr. Benjamin E. Mays was a mentor to Martin Luther King, Jr. Although different definitions have been used to describe *mentor*, the com-

mon image is a wise, older person who guides a younger person in a warm, caring, and helping relationship in all aspects of life.

Much like Fred Fiedler's (1979) situational leadership, mentoring relationships are situational, covering a wide variety of roles, including teacher, advisor, counselor, coach, "godfather," sponsor, confidant, tutor, guide, role model, and pseudoparent. Ruth Noller (1982), quoting K. Fury, writes, "There would be less confusion if the word 'mentor' meant the same thing to everybody." Studies by Levinson (1978), Kanter (1977), Sheehy (1976), and Kram (1980) are examples of major research used to define a *mentor*. But researchers' definitions vary as do the theories upon which they based their studies of the mentorship phenomenon.

Business organizational researchers describe how mentors have helped facilitate career socialization of neophytes into an organization. Most of the major mentorship research conducted on informal or evolving mentor relationships in businesses, teacher induction, and higher education describe how the mentor relationship helps new employees learn the duties and responsibilities.

As aspirants and new school administrators have sought ways to observe and practice educational leadership, interest in mentorships has spread to public school administration. Aspirants and newly hired school administrators view mentorship experiences as a "hands on" way to learn their leadership roles. Several states and school districts are beginning to implement formally organized mentorship programs for administrative preparation and socialization. The Danforth Program for principals sponsored by the Danforth Foundation, the Peer Assisted Leadership project created by Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, and the Dayton Entry-year Pilot Program implemented by Dayton (Ohio) City School District are examples of programs that have a collegial support or formal mentorship component.

Experiential Training

The current educational literature suggests that administrators view experiential or "hands on" learning as important in skill and knowledge development. This view was supported by respondents to the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators and the University of Oregon's Leadership in Educational Administration and Development (LEAD)survey in 1987. Over 57 percent of the 144 administrators interviewed thought training should include "hands-on" internships and practica.

Practitioners often complain that the theory taught in university preparation programs does not deal with the practical or operational aspects of an administrative job. Kent Peterson (1985) says, "Few preparation programs or districts help principals improve the ways they learn from experience." Preservice training, he contends, can be improved by providing simulated on-

the-job experiences under the guidance of a successful, experienced practicing administrator.

The popular notion of a mentor helping with guided field experience enhances the preparation and the socialization of new administrators. A mentor relationship helps aspiring and neophyte public school administrators better incorporate practice with theory.

Socialization into an Organization

Although learning the technical aspects of a school administrative position is difficult, for aspirants what is more difficult in the socialization process is understanding and assimilating the unwritten nuances and procedures that are inherent in any organization. Schools and school districts are similar to other organizations in that they each have their own culture and set of rules and expectations for organizational members—"How we do things around here." Socialization of newcomers into an organization can be either traumatic or smooth depending upon how the newcomer learns to cope and make sense of the problematic environment of an organization. John Van Maanen and Edgar Schein (1979) describe organizational socialization as the way newcomers learn the traditions and unwritten or subtle nuances of the organization from more experienced colleagues. Because each school has unique traditions and norms, the socialization process has implications for new administrators and those who aspire to become principals, district administrators, or superintendents in public schools.

Having a mentor is one way to provide guided field experiences that help aspirants learn operational facets and also assist in the socialization process of neophytes. A mentor can help a neophyte learn a job and the subtle nuances of an organization more quickly and smoothly. Mentor relationships have been in existence for a long time, but since the mid-1970s, mentorships have been explicitly explored as a viable way to help new executives and managers in business "learn the ropes." Even though these formally organized mentorship programs have received mixed reviews as to their success, the literature suggests that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. That view is also supported by the views expressed by participants in Oregon programs.

Adult Development and Career Development

Before reviewing formal mentorship programs in school administration, it is helpful to look at theory that undergirds the mentor-protege concept. Some researchers believe successful mentorships stem from adult developmental theory. Other researchers argue that career development theory frames the mentor-protege relationship. The debate, however, contin-

ues about whether a mentor influences life development or career development or both.

Developer of Life Skills

Adult development theorists examine the probable stages individuals go through during early and middle adulthood. Daniel Levinson and colleagues (1978), who based their two-year exploratory study on adult development, described a mentor as a teacher, sponsor, counselor, developer of skills and intellect, host, guide, and exemplar. They saw mentoring relationships as a special form of the parent-child relationship and peer support without being either.

Eileen Shapiro and colleagues (1978) used a continuum with "peer pals" on one end and mentors on the opposite end. On one end of the continuum, colleagues who helped each other to succeed and progress were called "peer pals." On the other end, mentors had a more intense and "paternalistic" type of relationship with their proteges. Those "mentors" were compared to the "godfathers" or "rabbis" described in Kanter's (1977) study.

Some researchers have suggested that primary mentors care about the proteges personally as well as professionally. Studies support the notion that mentors play a significant role in a young person's life as they develop from adolescence to midlife. Mentors were key figures in transmitting the values and beliefs that shaped proteges' personal and/or professional lives.

Guide for Career Success

Other researchers say that mentors primarily affect only the career aspects of an individual's life. In *Passages* Gail Sheehy (1976) spoke of the "wunderkind" of man who achieves success early and who almost always "has a coach . . . [who] grooms him early." Gerald Roche (1979) reported that not all successful executives had mentors, but the description of those who had mentor relationships matched Levinson and others' definition. He found that successful executives who had a mentor were better educated, were more likely to follow a career plan, sponsored more proteges, and appeared happier and more satisfied with their work. He also found that executives seek mentors during the first fifteen years—the learning and growing period—of their careers. Mentors provide an impetus for the novice to learn job skills and an opportunity to think beyond the practical skills to the "big picture" or policy level.

Career and Psychosocial Functions

In a landmark study on mentoring, Kathy Kram (1985) discusses mentorships in terms of career functions and psychosocial functions rather

than separating the two. She defines *career functions* as "those facets of a mentor relationship that enhance career advancement," which include sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments as career functions. She considers those facets of the relationship that enhance a "sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role" as *psychosocial functions*. Role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counseling, and friendship are included as psychosocial functions.

Kram contends that these two broad functions are parallel and "not entirely distinct; supporting career advancement may also enhance an individual's sense of competence and effectiveness in the managerial role." An individual's personal life and career life are so intertwined that it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate the two. Career and psychosocial functions are present in formal as well as informal relationships. By understanding how informal relationships function, organizations may be able to establish successful formal mentor programs.

Formal Mentor Programs

Formally organized mentoring programs are being implemented in businesses and schools to assist new employees' transition into their jobs and help encourage the selection and advancement of women and minorities into higher levels of management. Top-level executives in companies like Jewel Tea are finding that these programs help younger employees acquire skills and self-confidence to become more productive managers and executives. William Drury (1988) reports that the Ohio legislature mandated that all entry-level staff in schools receive ongoing assistance their first year in a new position. In response to that requirement, Dayton City School District developed a pilot program for entry-year administrators that includes a mentoring component.

In a similar vein, in 1987 the Danforth Foundation implemented a mentor component in an induction program at Ohio State University (Daresh 1987c). Mentorships with experienced local administrators were added to improve and monitor the personal professional development of future school leaders. Another program is Peer Assisted Leadership (PAL), instituted in fall 1983 by Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development in some of the San Francisco Bay Area schools. According to Bruce Barnett (1985), PAL uses "shadowing" and "reflective interviewing" to help practicing principals "analyze their leadership behavior and that of a peer partner in a nonprescriptive and nonjudgmental manner." The PAL program stresses that there are multiple ways to lead schools. Barnett suggests that the PAL program could be adapted to serve the needs of aspirants as well as current principals.

The Dayton, Danforth, and PAL projects are designed to help partici-

pants understand the complex role of a principal and better prepare them to carry out the job effectively.

Advantages of Formal Programs

Participants report several advantages of formally organized mentorship programs. According to proteges, the opportunities to learn about the organization are greatly increased when working with a mentor. Donald Bowen (1985) suggests that structured formally organized mentorship programs can provide opportunities (particularly for women and minorities) to learn from a senior member of the organization through observation and discussion. Both aspirants and neophytes feel they benefit greatly from participating in "what if" discussions and observing their mentors "in action." Newly hired administrators particularly appreciate being able to obtain help or feedback on ideas from someone who respects their confidentiality. Proteges also report increased self-confidence, knowledge, and variety of on-the-job experiences as benefits of working with a mentor.

Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977) suggests three ways a mentor's power can help those individuals who are on the "fast track": (1) being in a position to fight for the person in question; (2) helping the person bypass the hierarchy; and (3) providing reflected power. According to Kanter, a mentor's power opens doors more quickly for new workers; also, with a mentor's protection, proteges have more opportunities to take risks, thereby strengthening their ability to accept greater levels of responsibility. Formal programs can help channel that power to the advantage of the aspirant or neophyte school administrator. By tapping the knowledge and skill of the veteran administrator, new administrators can often avoid many pitfalls in their first job. For the aspirant, formal mentor programs provide additional "hands-on" learning opportunities. Sometimes, however, mentors and proteges experience difficulties in their relationship.

Disadvantages of Formal Programs

Participating in a formal mentorship program is not all a "bed of roses." Some of the potential disadvantages of formally organized mentorship programs result from cross-gender matchups. A mentor and protege must work in close proximity and attain a certain level of intimacy, which can create tension and anxiety for members of a cross-gender pair. Recent reports are mixed on the cross-gender problems, however. Women proteges interviewed by Margaret Hennig and Anne Jardim (1977) said their male mentors shared an intense, but not sexual, interest in their proteges' personal and professional development. According to Elizabeth Bolton (1980), some women are concerned about not having a woman for a role model. As more women fill top-level administrative positions, that concern is diminishing.

More top-level women administrators are mentoring other women. They are also mentoring some men.

Resentment of proteges by their coworkers who do not have mentors, inability of some successful executives to be good mentors, and poor matches are frequently cited problems of artificially formed mentor relationships. Sometimes mentor relationships end very negatively when the protege's abilities surpass those of the mentor and threaten the mentor's position on the job or in the relationship. Another disadvantage for the protege is if the mentor falls out of favor in the organization. Philosophical disagreements between the mentor and protege can also cause problems unless handled properly. Personality differences between the two can also result in a negative experience. Most of the disadvantages cited can be overcome or diminished in formal programs by increasing the awareness of and planning for potential problems.

Suggestions for Formal Programs

In spite of some weaknesses with formal mentor relationships, participants report that having someone assigned to work with them can increase their learning, their knowledge, and their skill level. Practicing newly acquired knowledge is critical for increasing the transfer of that new knowledge or theory. According to Bolton (1980), human behavior is largely socially transmitted or acquired through behavioral examples provided by influential models. Bolton writes there are some things "which cannot be reduced to text books or formal class learning." Rudi Klauss (1981) contends that the intensity of formalized mentor relationships may not be as great as that of the informal, highly personalized mentor experiences, but the former nevertheless can have considerable impact on the careers of individuals.

For formal programs to achieve optimal success, several conditions must be met, according to Linda Phillips-Jones (1983). Among her suggestions for a successful mentorship program are these features: top management support, inclusion of the program in larger career development effort, voluntary participation, short duration, careful selection of both mentors and mentees, orientation of participants, structured flexibility, adaptation to challenges, and monitoring the program.

The next chapter presents some examples of formal programs that Oregon school districts have instituted. David Douglas, Tigard, West Linn, and North Clackamas have different objectives and are at different points in the development of their formal mentor programs, but all are designed to help administrators make smoother transitions into their jobs or to improve their performance.

Chapter 2

Mentorship Models in Oregon Districts

If the best of me can make more of you
Then the best of you will reflect on me
Josefowitz (1980)

Although numerous districts have established mentor programs for beginning teachers, few have developed similar programs for aspiring or newly hired administrators. Three Oregon school districts, however, have implemented programs specifically for newly hired administrators. Many veteran administrators, remembering what it was like being new to a job, believe by establishing some type of structured program they can help ensure the success of new administrators they hire.

This chapter provides an overview of mentorship programs in David Douglas, Tigard, and North Clackamas. In addition, informal mentorships in West Linn that have emerged from a program designed to prepare aspirants or to orient new administrators are highlighted.

Retired Administrators as Mentors

Two school districts—David Douglas and Tigard—operate formal mentorship programs that rely on the expertise of retired administrators. Whereas David Douglas's program focuses on beginning principals, all principals in Tigard will eventually benefit from the help of a mentor.

David Douglas School District

A high priority in the David Douglas School District is the socializa-

tion of first-year principals. The district's principal induction program was featured in the October 1988 OSSC Bulletin by Mark Anderson. Since 1984 five new principals have been hired and the district anticipates additional retirements within the next three years. To help orient first-time principals or principals who are new to David Douglas, district officials assign a mentor to each rookie principal. Superintendent Tony Palermini believes that an assigned mentor can help new principals more quickly and easily learn about the organization. Thus, a formalized mentoring component is the center piece of the district's induction program. David Douglas's program is nothing more than the "teacher-mentor program as applied to the building principal," said Palermini when interviewed by Anderson (1988).

Rookie principals often feel they should have all the answers and fear they will be perceived as less than competent if they ask too many questions of their colleagues. When he established the program, Palermini addressed this concern by pairing up rookies with successful administrators who had retired from the David Douglas system. He believes retired administrators are ideal for the mentor role because they are familiar with the organization's rules and norms, but are slightly removed from the district. Interactions between the mentor and protege are separated from the administrative evaluation procedure. Designing the mentorship outside the evaluation process increases the protege's openness to discuss any problem, concern, or issue with a mentor. Proteges also know that, because retired administrators have no vested interest in outcomes, they will honor the confidential nature of the mentor-protege relationship and that the discussions will not come back to haunt them.

Sometimes rookie administrators are hesitant to call their colleagues because they know how busy other administrators are with their own jobs. Therefore, another advantage in using retired administrators is that they have more time to spend with their proteges. David Douglas mentors meet with rookies an average of one full day each week, giving the mentor time to see the whole scope of what is happening in that principal's building. Gene Cook, a twenty-five-year veteran of the district, is one of the retired administrators who serves as a mentor. Cook has mentored Harriet Jackson, Doris Cameron-Minard, and most recently Douglas Sharp. Principal of Lincoln Park Elementary, Sharp echoes the positive comments other mentees have made. "Gene is a very safe base to ask questions and share problems." Mentees feel comfortable asking questions and seeking advice from Cook.

Sharp notes that a mentor does not "force himself upon you, but that the relationship is a tool to help make a new principal's life less stressful." Even though Sharp had prior experience as a vice-principal, he thinks the only way to learn how to be a principal is actually working on the job. Knowing that someone is readily available to bounce off ideas and stimulate thinking about future problems increases a first-year principal's confidence. To Sharp, the fact that there are no evaluations or reports channeled back to the district helped him develop the trust essential for a mentorship of this

type to work. He knows Cook wants him to succeed and will help any way he can. Cook asks him questions like, "Have you thought of. . .?; Do you have plans for. ..?" Sharp says he "helps me think about future events, which helps me be better prepared."

According to Anderson (1988), other mentees also report positive experiences with Cook. They worked with him on staffing, building budgets, teacher evaluations, parent-teacher relationships, and other basic aspects of a principal's job. Having that builtin support also helped reduce the isolation a new administrator feels when moving from the classroom into a principalship. Cook's tenure with the district provides him with an understanding of the unwritten history behind many district rules and procedures. He willingly shares that information with rookies, enabling them to better understand why certain decisions are made. Cook's insights can help new principals avoid making mistakes that are costly to the individual or to the district.

This unique mentorship program fosters growth and support for rookie principals. Often those relationships continue beyond the scheduled year. Cook and Jackson, for example, have continued their relationship since her rookie year in 1984. Sharp notes that even if the mentorship were not formal, he would still "feel comfortable calling him up." Knowing a veteran administrator is out there to act as a "safety net," a guide, and a coach gives new principals the confidence to take risks and to learn from their mistakes.

Are there other models for using retired administrators as mentors? The following section looks at Tigard's use of a recently retired assistant superintendent for personnel as a mentor for all the district's administrators.

Tigard School District

When Bob Post, a veteran Tigard administrator, recently retired, he was looking for a meaningful way to help the district. His wish to help meshed nicely with Al Davidian's desire to establish a mentorship program for administrators in the district. Thus, a formal mentorship program for Tigard School District's administrators came to fruition in November 1988. Davidian, assistant superintendent for personnel, says the program has two main goals:

1. to provide orientation and support for administrators new to the district
2. to provide staff development and support for all administrators in the district

Using the state mentorship program for teachers and the David Douglas administrative mentorship model as guides, Davidian asked Post if he would serve as the district's first administrative mentor. Post believes the mentorship program is a worthwhile way to fulfill the fifteen days a year for the district that is a part of his early retirement package. Any additional time Post spends consulting in the district is reimbursed on a per diem basis.

Davidian feels Post can ably serve as a mentor because of his reputation in and knowledge of the district. Post served as an elementary principal eleven years before he became assistant superintendent for personnel.

With the two goals as Post's only guidelines, he has been free to develop the program with the four administrators who are his mentees. His mentees are two elementary principals who are new to the district, an elementary principal who has been in the district for several years but is in a new building, and a central office administrator who is also a veteran of the system. The latter two administrators worked with Post when he served in Davidian's role. But "I'm not their boss anymore; I am their confidant." He feels the program is working well so far.

"As a new principal to the district, having a mentor to orient me to the district has been beneficial," says Mary Alice Russell, principal of Metzger Elementary. "Post's insights and conversations provided me a more independent view of the district and its history. I gained an understanding of why certain decisions are made and certain things are stressed." Scott Baker, also new to the district, notes that working with a person who has already done the same job in the system gives him a good perspective on his new job. "I respect all the years he had here. He has the inside scoop." Often incumbent principals take for granted many things they do and neglect to explain to the new principals the unwritten rules and expectations. Having someone who "knows the ropes" can help a new administrator adjust more easily.

Confidentiality and Trust. Post points out that his four mentees "can't ask me a dumb question. I have no power over them at all. All I'm there to do is to help them." Davidian and Post emphasize that the mentor relationship is strictly confidential. Post works with his mentees outside the evaluation process, and no reports on the pairs' activities go to the superintendent. Post's goal is to help good administrators become better, stronger administrators. He also hopes to help them improve the skill of reaching out to others to become better listeners to their teachers and staff. Post believes a principal has "arrived" when teachers feel comfortable telling the principal what was good or bad about a particular decision.

In November 1988, Post spent time with each of his four mentees establishing a trust level upon which to build their relationships. During the first meeting, each mentee established some target areas to work on. To help guide the mentee in reaching his or her target, Post meets with the mentee three times a month for an hour or more each time. Post knows how busy principals are, but these meetings have a high priority and they set aside time for them. Usually he goes in with an agenda; however, he is open to discuss anything that is on their minds. Sometimes the meetings are hard to break off. "All of a sudden I'm going to be late [for the next meeting] because the administrator doesn't want to stop talking." Post feels he is there to support, guide, cajole, and challenge them. "When we look back at the year, the administrators can say, 'These are the things I am doing now that I wasn't doing before'."

Although Fred Puhl is new to Edward Byrom Elementary, he has worked in the district for eleven years. Despite his experience, he likes the feedback he is receiving as a result of working with Post. "Very often administrators don't get any feedback except maybe once a year. I like it. It gives me things to think about and so to me it's a real positive thing." Puhl likes the opportunity to have someone to talk to, share ideas with, and get feedback from. He feels Post has spent a lot of time trying to make the experience positive. "He challenges me, which is good. He's not just giving me answers but he challenges me to give him information, give him answers."

Barbara Bengel, special services director, is also a veteran in the district. She worked with Post for several years and had already developed a level of trust with him. She feels he has always helped guide her through the system. Having Post work with her as a mentor "is just kind of an extension of what we've always done." Bengel notes that a mentor, like Post, helps you get organized and build structure to the year. She believes she has met her goals more quickly and more effectively "because there was someone to talk to about it." Articulating what she planned to do and how she planned to do it helped her as she went into situations. Being able to debrief what happened and how she would handle the same situation in the future was also very beneficial. It's been a wonderful experience for me."

As a sort of midyear evaluation to help his mentees see if they were meeting their targets, Post suggested he interview teachers with whom the mentees are working. After the mentees agreed, Post and each mentee discussed whom he should interview and how the comments would be handled. One condition was that the teachers' comments would come back as a group and not individually. One of the things Post discovered was that the teachers are happy the district is spending money to help administrators get better.

Refining the Program. Post is working with this year's mentees to establish some clear objectives, guidelines, and activities for the mentorship program for the future. They are discussing what has worked and what has not worked in an effort to refine the program. Davidian views the mentor program as a professional growth activity and expects that all the administrators will rotate through the program within the next few years. He believes having a mentor provides the necessary support for administrators to take risks for professional improvement. Davidian notes that any evaluation will be of the program, not of the individuals involved.

Post thinks this is a good program that will continue to get better. He believes administrators need someone they can level with and make them feel better about themselves. "A mentor," says Post, " is a sponge and a punching bag combined." Bengel describes a mentor-protege relationship in terms of a friendship. "You can have lots of acquaintances and you enjoy good relationships with your acquaintances. But with a real friend you could talk about just anything. I guess that's what the mentorship relationship is for me."

Tigard's program utilizes a retired administrator to assist district administrators identify and reach individual professional growth targets. As well as professional development, there appear to be many other ways mentors can help administrators. They can help orient rookies or experienced administrators who are new to a district. A mentorship can be the primary focus of an orientation program or can be an integral part of a more extensive induction program in a district.

Mentorships as Components of Other Programs

Although orientation of new administrators is the goal in North Clackamas and West Linn, their programs are structured a little differently than the programs in David Douglas and Tigard. North Clackamas has a fairly extensive induction program for principals that includes a mentorship as a primary element.

North Clackamas School District

The Mentor Principal Program at North Clackamas is designed to help rookie administrators master district performance standards and become familiar with district rules, expectations, and procedures. Featured in the October 1988 OSSC Bulletin, the mentor component is one part of a comprehensive induction program for new principals. Each rookie administrator is paired with an experienced principal who helps guide his or her partner through the difficult first year. "I think the mentor program not only meets the needs of the new administrator, but it also give a certain affirmation to the experienced administrator and lets us say we appreciate their work, have a lot of confidence in them, and need their help," said Superintendent Ben Schellenberg when interviewed by Anderson (1988).

North Clackamas has clear goals and expectations for the program, including specific criteria for the mentor. Besides having at least four successful years as a principal, the mentor must be interested in participating, be a good communicator, be creative and innovative, and be knowledgeable about the school, faculty, attendance area, and level. Mentors help orient new principals to all aspects of the district and community. They provide support by being on call to answer questions and give suggestions. Mentors assist the rookies with professional growth opportunities and provide feedback through informal advice about specific job functions. That informal feedback gives rookies a perspective on how well they are doing in their new role as principals.

Mentors are assigned beginning with the screening of candidates for a vacant position and continuing through the principal's first year. Mentors serve on a rotating basis and receive a daily salary rate for extra days worked as a mentor outside the regular contract time. The activities in which the

mentor and mentee participate are established by the pair. According to Anderson, Chuck Hopman, principal of Sunnyside Elementary, mentored Dave Larson, principal of Ardenwald Elementary, in 1987-88. They developed a close working relationship and worked on setting personal and professional goals for the year, holding the first faculty meeting of the year, dealing with a variety of personnel issues, evaluating teachers, and transferring students. One of the functions mentors serve is as a "sounding board" with whom rookies feel free to discuss anything.

Although North Clackamas has an all-encompassing induction program, the formal mentorship plays a vital role in helping new principals be successful. Another district—West Linn—has experienced the formation of informal mentorships as a result of a training program for teachers who aspire to administrative positions

West Linn School District

In 1980, West Linn's middle school enrollment increased to the point the district needed to add staff to assist the principals. The staff development specialist saw those positions as an opportunity to train some teachers to become administrators. Thus, an internship was created to provide opportunities for teachers on special assignment to teach half time and work on administrative duties the other half of the time. Those positions have evolved into a full-time internship. Currently, the positions are called *instructional coordinators* and the internship consists of teaching only one class and working in administration the remainder of the time. Assistant Superintendent Dick Sagor views the program as a training ground in administration for elementary and middle school staff members. Working in an administrative internship can help aspirants decide if administration is for them. "They get a chance to do everything, experience everything."

Mike Tannenbaum, director of curriculum and instruction, says a mentoring component is consciously built into the program. The instructional coordinator's principal is his or her chief mentor. "They form a true partnership in running the building." Under the tutelage of their principals, every avenue of responsibility is open to the instructional coordinators. All they need to do is let their principal know when they are ready to accept a new or different responsibility. During the three- to five-year placement, the instructional coordinators generally spend all the time in one school or three years in one school and two years in another school. By spending more than one year in a building, they can institute a change and follow it through.

Before Marilyn Seger became principal of Bolton Middle School, she was an instructional coordinator working with Tannenbaum, who was principal of Bolton at the time . Tannenbaum describes Seger as a "superb educator" with whom he developed a partnership for running Bolton. "Whatever needed to be done, we were both comfortable doing it," says Tannenbaum. He characterizes their relationship as having a very high level of trust. Tan-

nenbaum continues to call Seger and work with her on committees for instructional improvement. He feels their mentoring relationship did as much for him as for her. She was somebody he could talk with, thereby helping him make much better decisions.

From the district's perspective, Assistant Superintendent Sagor believes the program is successful and provides a long-term form of mentoring. Teachers can experience being an administrator, and the district benefits from the talents of those individuals. Using Teachers On Special Assignment (TOSA) allows the district to provide opportunities for more teachers to participate. After the three to five years in the internship, the instructional coordinators typically either move into a full-time administrative position or back into full-time teaching. Tannenbaum says either way is acceptable; both choices are very positive decisions. He thinks the program provides a wonderful opportunity for people to try being an administrator. Regardless of the aspirant's decision, often the mentoring relationship continues. Sagor says that, from a management perspective, the experience is "terrific." Good people do good work and learn a lot more about how to become a member of a management team.

Chapter 3

Mentorship Programs Sponsored by Professional Organizations

One goal of the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA), the professional organization for administrators, is to provide support for new administrators. The organization is dedicated to assisting new members to become effective school administrators, particularly during their initial year.

This chapter looks at three formal mentorship programs operating under COSA's umbrella. The "Mentorship Program" is designed for aspiring administrators. Either practicing or aspiring administrators can participate in the "Springfield Development Program," which has a mentor component. Principal Advocate Programs and New Member Support Programs sponsored by COSA's four affiliate associations are structured to provide assistance to administrators who are either new to their jobs or to the district or building.

The COSA Mentorship Program

Recognizing the lack of women and minorities in school administrative positions, Pat Schmuck, director of educational administration at Lewis and Clark College, and Boyd Applegarth, superintendent of Beaverton School District, were instrumental in the inception of a statewide, formal mentorship program. Their commitment to nurturing professionalism in educational administration and a desire to create opportunities for new people in the profession provided the foundation for the mentorship program.

Focus on Women and Minorities

Schmuck's concern about the barriers that women and minorities face when they try to break into the administrative ranks led her to conceptualize a structure whereby mentors could be "appointed" to selected aspiring candidates. By structuring a formal program in that way, women and minorities could meet practicing school officials and learn about their jobs first hand. Applegarth, who was serving as COSA president at the time of the program's creation, believes the program is a common-sense approach to identify and foster talent among women and minorities for administrative positions.

Thus, the Mentorship Program for aspiring school administrators began in fall 1986 with the backing of the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA), Northwest Women in Educational Administration (NWEA), and Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL). Since 1986, a total of sixty aspirants (proteges) and sixty mentors have participated in the program.

Each year twenty practicing administrators are appointed to act as mentors to twenty selected aspiring administrators (proteges). The mentors assist the aspirants in their exploration of educational administration. Kate Dickson, who helps facilitate the program for COSA, said,

> The real purpose of the Mentorship Program is to provide experiences for people who are curious about becoming a school administrator as well as those who are very interested in that role. It provides them some "real life" experience with the world of school administration and it also . . . provides them a very supporting and nurturing relationship with a school administrator, and that relationship is often times the richest part of the whole experience.

The mentor and protege develop a sense of trust and a bond that helps the latter go through that risk-taking effort of applying for school administrative positions. Then, as the aspirant finally takes on that first administrative position, a support system is already there for him or her. Dickson notes that having someone who "knows the ropes" to talk with, to get advice from, and to share ideas with creates a security and energy that doesn't exist for people who are trying to go it alone.

Distinctive Features

The program has two distinctive aspects. One is the attempt to provide increased opportunities for women and minorities. Underrepresented groups are actively encouraged to pursue preservice administrative experiences through this program. The other feature of this program is that the mentors and proteges do not work in the same school district but are matched from nearby districts. Adrian Cook, a protege from Central Linn, felt that being in different districts was important, but that the geographic distance should be short enough for the mentor and protege to meet frequently. Char-

lotte Smith, a protege from McMinnville who was matched with Barbara Bengel, from Tigard, wanted to look at administration in a different district and felt this program provided her that opportunity. Several proteges said they felt more free to ask all kinds of questions because their mentor was from a different district.

Dinner Meetings

Another strength of this program is the four dinner/presentation meetings held during the school year. The pairs discuss important educational issues and share with other participants the things they have done. Susan Wilt, who participated in the program the first year, said the meetings are "a chance to meet other aspirants—people like yourself—and to make friendships among them." Wilt stated that the meetings also provide an opportunity to do some public speaking.

Another benefit of the meetings, mentioned by Dickson, is that as mentors and proteges shared their experiences other participants would "kind of nudge each other and say, that's a great idea." She believes that the sharing helps each pair try out ideas they may not have considered.

The meetings are held in October, February, April, and June. The June meeting is held in conjunction with the annual COSA Conference at Seaside. The aspirants are encouraged to attend the annual conference to gain additional professional knowledge and to become acquainted with other administrators throughout the state.

The Mentor's Role

Through support and encouragement, the mentors help by teaching about a specific job and providing access to possible advancement in a career area. The mentors help the proteges achieve their short-term objectives for professional development and improvement in their preparation for school administration. Mentors are not responsible for assisting the protege in a job search or to find a position; however, several mentors chose to help their proteges in that way. In the first communication from the sponsoring organizations, the following responsibilities were outlined for the mentors:

1. Spend a reasonable amount of time with the candidate on a regular basis, either in person or on the phone
2. Assist them in developing ways to improve their skills
3. Provide information about professional development activities
4. Provide specific and concrete feedback about their performance
5. Have conversations about the way you see your work and the issues that you face

Tim Bishop, a protege in 1987-88, felt his year with Molly Ramburg, principal of William Walker Elementary in Beaverton, was very successful. They structured their meetings around what he wanted to gain from Ramburg; this approach, he said, "proved to be really worthwhile." They met at least two times a month and had planned agendas for their meetings. Most of their time together was after school; however, Bishop did shadow Ramburg on occasion during the school day. Both expressed positive feelings about those meetings. They spent a considerable amount of time talking about what Ramburg did in situations she experienced and why she handled those situations in a certain manner. Ramburg stated that articulating her reasons for actions helped her to clarify her thinking and that Bishop kept her "on her toes." When Bishop was hired as principal of Peter Boscow Elementary in Hillsboro, Ramburg was thrilled. "I thought, good for us. It was neat I was there to help put finishing touches on a great dessert."

The Aspirant's Role

To qualify for this program aspirants must hold an administrative certificate or be enrolled in a program leading to the certificate. Membership in COSA or NWEA is also desirable. The applicants submit an application and written statement about their immediate and long-range career objectives, what they intend to contribute to education, what they hope to gain from this program, and how they think a mentor might assist them. The twenty aspirants are selected on the basis of their written statements, geographical distribution, and career objectives.

The pairs' experiences vary considerably. The activities range from shadowing an administrator to filling in for an administrator when he or she is out of the building. Many proteges said that they worked on resumes and interviewing, while others wanted to learn about more specific operational aspects. Some mentors and proteges went to lunch or dinner or attended conferences together. According to protege Barbara Hanson, one of the strengths of the program is that it is nonstructured. There are no expectations, no guidelines, not even a framework. "It's basically whatever you and your mentor want to do, so participants have taken various paths."

For Wilt, the mentorship served to synthesize knowledge and experience. She said,

> You can read about leadership until you're blue in the face but to try to go out and do it is another thing. You've got to have that transfer, and I don't think it happens naturally. I think just because you know something in a book doesn't mean you have the skills to go out and make it happen.

This program gives an aspirant an opportunity to talk and work with people who are practicing leadership and to find out what does and does not work.

Program Budget

The program is supported by small grants from LEAD and the Oregon Department of Education. The remainder of the costs are covered by the participants. The administrative aspirants pay a $50 fee to cover meals and program costs. Mentors and proteges also pay their expenses to and from the meetings. For an additional fee, two hours of University credit are available from Portland State University, the University of Oregon, or Lewis and Clark College.

Sustaining the Mentorship

One of the criteria for evaluating a mentorship program is its long-term effects on the participants; by this standard most mentors and proteges agree this program has to be judged a success. Dickson has observed that the program is really a "catalyst for starting a mentorship relationship" that grows and develops over time. A number of participants from the first year are still very close to one another and will probably continue to be life-long colleagues as well as friends.

Dickson has watched the fledgling relationships change as proteges move into their first administrative positions. At that point the mentorship becomes a coaching relationship. For example, Wilt, hired this year as principal of Riddle High School, has continued her relationship with her mentor Lynne George, principal of James Monroe Middle School in Eugene. George, who supported Wilt through the difficult stages of applying for administrative positions, says the most rewarding aspect of their relationship was when Wilt was hired in Riddle. Now that Wilt is a principal, George is continuing to help her through her first year.

Benefits for Mentors

Many mentors would judge the program a success merely on the basis of its contribution to their own development, let alone the benefits proteges receive. Dickson comments on this flip side of the relationships: "Mentors report that their participation has been a *very* enriching experience for them because it's provided them an opportunity to think and talk out loud about how they do things and why they do things." Mentors point out that the opportunity for continued exchange within a structured framework really has not existed for them before. They have commented that they are much better school administrators as a result of this experience because they have had an opportunity to reflect on their own practice and perhaps had to answer some fairly tough questions about why they do certain things. Several of the administrators have acknowledged that they have changed some things that they do because of the discussions and questions that have occurred. Dickson sums up the mutual benefits the mentors and proteges receive:

> It's a wonderful two-way relationship. It's not just one person receiving and one person giving, but it's a very reciprocal opportunity of giving and receiving. I think that probably one of the reasons why it tends to be very successful and very exciting is that both the mentor and the protege take risks, they both learn, they both have opportunities to grow, and they both in their own way have opportunities to teach. So there's a real reciprocal nature to that whole effort.

The Mentorship Program is only one of the programs COSA sponsors. The association also conducts the Springfield Development Program based upon a simulation of a prototypical school district. That simulation incorporates a mentor support system providing a link between the simulation and on-the-job performance.

The Springfield Development Program for Aspiring and Practicing Administrators

The "Springfield" approach was developed in 1982 by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) as a developmental program to follow up NASSP's Assessment Center Project. At present the program operates in approximately twenty states. In Oregon, the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) annually conducts the Springfield Development Program for potential and practicing school administrators interested in developing their leadership skills. A mentorship is an important feature of the Springfield Development Program. The Developmental Mentors provide support for the proteges during the simulation and during the following year. A goal of the simulation is to help participants outline a professional development plan and provide encouragement from a successful, experienced administrator.

The Simulation Activity

According to Wayne Robbins, director of the Oregon Assessment Center, the Springfield Development Program is an ideal followup to the NASSP Assessment Center. NASSP designed the Springfield simulation around six of the skill dimensions used in the Assessment Center: problem analysis, judgment, organizational ability, decisiveness, leadership, and sensitivity. During the three days of training at the Springfield Development Program, twenty participants are involved in a realistic school district simulation. Participants are given a specific position assignment. According to NASSP, the inbaskets used in Springfield contain important information for the successful operation of the school district as well as specific information about each position. The information in each inbasket for each position is

interrelated to other positions. The simulation provides a climate for learning and an opportunity, in a safe environment, for participants to work on improving their administrative skills.

To be eligible to participate in Springfield an individual must have been assessed in an NASSP Assessment Center; indicated a desire to go through long-term developmental training; and been nominated by the school district, state department of education, or university for development.

The program is structured to cover a fifteen-to-twenty-week period. The three-day simulation is followed by a fifteen-to-eighteen-week inservice (on the job) program and a one-day formal followup session. According to NASSP officials, the program is designed around proven adult development practices that include:

- Personalized needs assessment
- A "safe" job-like learning environment
- Understanding of six critical generic administrative skill dimensions
- Extensive performance feedback from practicing administrators and peers
- Clarification of goals
- An individualized experiential development plan
- A system for monitoring administrative skill development
- Support from a trained mentor
- Long-term followup
- Access to peer support network
- A continuing self-directed career development process
- Increased self-confidence

"I think ongoing professional development is a key component in any administrator's life, and I view this program as a significant event or foundation for leadership enforcement," said Joyce Osternig, human resources administrator in the Eugene Public Schools and a mentor in the Springfield program. She believes that anytime administrators have an opportunity to interact with other administrators and to exchange ideas and talents, they will develop a more global perspective on issues and benefit from collaboration with others. The program also reaffirms that common leadership dimensions exist throughout an organizational system from classroom teacher through the superintendency and that those skills can be transported to different settings.

Jack Stoops, reading teacher at Springfield High School, says, "One thing the program did was to give me a connection to the administrative profession with an established administrator who has 'hands on' experience." A protege in this program three years ago, he points out that his participation helped him merge research in university classwork with experience in the

field. He developed a strong commitment to the educational administrative profession.

The Role of Developmental Mentor

A key ingredient of this program is the Developmental Mentor who provides a link between the simulation and job performance. Five mentors are chosen based on their expertise or experience base each time a Springfield Development Center is conducted. Each of the five mentors, who are trained assessors, is assigned four candidates and works with them during the simulation and the remainder of the year. Osternig says the "intent or goal is to place people in an environment and allow leadership potential to flourish. The mentors are not there collecting data to appraise or to bring to the attention of the mentees their deficiencies or strengths." The proteges complete a Developmental Needs Questionnaire to help identify the skills they want to improve and the position they wish to pursue. Proteges are assigned to mentors based on that information and similarities in job specialty. The mentors use the needs assessment to help guide their proteges toward improved skill levels.

General expectations and time schedules are outlined in the initial training the mentors receive the afternoon before the participants arrive. The training is very specific about what the mentors' responsibilities are during the simulation and the remainder of the year. During the simulation the mentors respond to the concerns of the proteges. Osternig notes mentors reassure participants during the two days and encourage them to "go about their assignments and their business just as if you were being paid for these two days." At the end of the simulation the mentors provide feedback about their observations of the proteges' job performance and chart their progress. There are no reports or evaluations written or given to the participants' school districts about their participation. Designed around the peer coaching concept, the program is strictly for the participant's professional development.

Before the end of the third day, proteges identify two to three leadership dimensions that they want to work on and develop an action plan for the following year to continue their professional improvement. The mentor relationship provides a lot of flexibility because mentors respond to the proteges' objectives for the year. Robbins notes that during the Springfield simulation the mentor meets with the protege to discuss what the action plan is, how they are both going to work with it, what their relationship is going to be, how often are they going to meet, and what they are going to do. After the mentor and protege cooperatively review the plan, it is sent to COSA.

The mentor's role varies but usually consists of encouraging and supporting a participant who is trying to improve administrative skills within the context of his or her present position. Barbara Bengel, special services

director in Tigard, believes the key to being a good mentor "is accepting people right where they are and going with what they need." Agreeing with Robbins and Bengel, Osternig says, "The plans are very individualized and are kind of a self-study." Proteges ask themselves, "How can I grow and extend my capabilities? What activities can I use to strengthen my skills?" The mentors work with the proteges to help them identify appropriate activities and connections with other administrators who will help the proteges grow professionally.

To support the protege's professional development, mentors help by doing such things as traveling to their school district to meet with them and their supervisor, sending them articles from professional journals, telephoning periodically to check on them, conversing about educational issues or problems, and providing shadowing experiences. Protege Elaine Wells, assistant principal at South Albany High School, says her mentor, Osternig, gives her a nonbiased viewpoint on issues. "I will give her a call and say, 'This is the situation, what do you think? She is an invaluable resource for me." Osternig believes that one of the underpinnings of successful leadership is a network of people that you can call. "The day-to-day operations in any leadership position require you to make both short-term and long-range decisions. Sometimes you need a neutral person to hear you out or to talk about an issue."

Support on a personal level can also be beneficial. Those times when he was down and out, Stoops' mentor would give him a gentle "kick in the rear," tell him to get his head up, and quit feeling sorry for himself. He found that was valuable, too. Osternig has also been known to play a prank or inject humor into her interactions with her proteges. She believes a sense of humor is one of the essential ingredients for administrators to help balance the stress of the job.

Followup Session

Six months after the simulation exercise, mentors and proteges attend a followup session to discuss what the proteges have accomplished, what additional goals they want to accomplish, and how the mentor can help them. Osternig says,

> That was a real powerful day when you, as a mentor, sit back and listen to the mentees. I remember attending my first one. I don't think I would have had to drive back to Eugene. I think I could have just floated back. I was really inspired by how the mentees approached their particular plans of work and their reporting back systems.

According to Robbins, "Almost all of the relationships between the mentor and the protege develop well and continue for that whole year." Wells attested to that fact. "I think if I had hand picked somebody to be my mentor it would be Joyce. She carried that role beyond what the program

was designed to do." Stoops says those who agreed to be mentors were dedicated, hardworking people who gave their own time to help proteges become better professionals. The mentors also find the relationships rewarding. "I think the exciting thing for me was that I grew or I learned so much from these people," Osternig says. "I was excited with the caliber and the diversity of the skills and interests of the mentees that I was lucky enough to work with. I don't know who had more fun or who grew more in this particular program." For Bengel, too, mentoring "was personally satisfying. "I had the feeling that I could be helpful."

Stoops captured the essence of the Developmental Mentor's role when he said, "The two days at the simulation were jammed packed full of activities. Some of that leaves you, but the mentoring aspect continues."

Advocate Programs for Supporting New Administrators

Members of the four associations under COSA's umbrella are helping new administrators in Oregon feel they are part of a network of supportive colleagues. The Oregon Association of School Executives (OASE), Oregon Association of Secondary School Administrators (OASSA), Oregon Elementary School Principals Association (OESPA), and Oregon Association of School Supervisors (OASS) each have advocate programs. The pioneer Principal Advocate Program was started by elementary principals. School executives, secondary principals, and supervisors, recognizing the need to provide support for new administrators in their ranks, have started parallel programs. OESPA's Principal Advocate Program provided the framework for the newer programs, though each organization operates its program a little differently.

The Principal Advocate Program

The goal of the Principal Advocate Program, initiated in fall 1987, is to support and welcome elementary and middle school principals who are new to their jobs or new to the state. When Marilyn Campbell served as OESPA president in 1987-88, she responded to an expressed need of elementary and middle school principals around the state. Those principals wanted to do something to help their colleagues adjust to their new jobs. Campbell, principal of Eyre Elementary in Salem-Keizer School District, enlisted the help of five of her colleagues to form the Principal Advocate Program Committee, which developed the program. OESPA adopted the following mission statement for the program:

> Our aim is to have an affirmative impact on newly hired elementary or middle school principals in Oregon by facilitating a supportive/ caring advocate relationship with a colleague.

Each fall, brochures are sent to all OESPA's members, who are en-

couraged to give the brochure to new principals in their districts. Since the advocate program is for nonmembers as well as OESPA members, the goal is to get the brochure to every elementary and middle school principal in the state, including principals of private schools. The brochure describes what the protege and advocate responsibilities are and outlines suggested activities. An interested protege completes the form in the brochure and mails it back to Campbell. She forwards the completed brochure to the appropriate regional representative, who matches the protege with an advocate.

Advocates are defined as "veteran principals who are willing to develop a supportive relationship with proteges." They are expected to support and encourage new principals by being a friend and confidant and being a good listener and communicator. Regional representatives match each advocate with a protege from a different district within their region. Campbell thinks this arrangement is beneficial to both parties because "sometimes you want to share personal feelings about things that you don't feel comfortable sharing with people in your own district." There is no deadline, so advocates and proteges can be matched any time during the year. Campbell noted that this year thirty-seven advocates and twenty-five proteges are participating in the program—more than twice the number who participated in the program's first year (1987-88).

The advocate and protege are encouraged to have at least three personal contacts each year. Often pairs meet as frequently as once a month to share activities or to enjoy a social contact. The pairs report they like sharing information about activities, newsletters, handbooks, disadvantaged programs, and business partnerships. Proteges discover they are not alone in the job and can discuss such items as personnel issues, opening of school, developing a budget, dealing with weak staff, time management, office organization, and stress management. According to Campbell, "Some nice friendships have developed from those contacts." She pointed out that advocates can introduce new principals to other administrators, school officials, state officers, and national officers. Jim Stell, current OESPA president, said the program is a "real good example of networking between beginning principals and experienced principals [who] both gain from that experience."

Another aspect of the programs is the benefit for veteran principals who want to share experiences or meet a new principal. Campbell hopes the message to elementary and middle school principals is that anybody who wants an advocate has access to one. A principal can be both a protege and advocate simultaneously. "In fact," she said, "I plan to be a protege and an advocate next year." OESPA board members plan to kick off the Advocate Program at their annual fall conference in October. Campbell thinks that is a perfect time for new advocates and proteges to meet each other and for those pairs who have already established a relationship to get together. Because of the program's success, she is sure it will grow next year.

New Member Support Programs for Other Administrators

The successful OESPA Advocate Program was the springboard for the other three departments of COSA to begin similar programs this year. Although their programs are operated somewhat differently, OASE, OASSA, and OASS have goals similar to the OESPA Principal Advocate Program. Each of those departments is in the formative stage of its own New Member Support Program, but the common objective of all the programs is for veteran administrators to help their professional colleagues.

George Benson, OASE president, said his association identified all superintendents new to their position this year and asked a neighboring superintendent to contact them. Benson said goals of their program include welcoming new superintendents into their region, providing support, and bringing them into the organization. He believes new superintendents need to know that help from veteran superintendents is as near as the telephone.

Lowell Pearce, president of OASSA, reported that approximately thirty-two new secondary administrators have been matched with ten veterans. New administrators were matched by school-size classification, enabling principals of schools similar in size to exchange information and discuss common problems. New secondary principals are using their advocates as sounding boards and are encouraged to feel "they don't have to know all the answers," Pearce said. Conversations with their advocates help build proteges' confidence. There are no guidelines for the advocates except to "be a friend to the person and like to help." Pearce sees great value in the program and believes it has a lot of potential. He and Bill McCadden, president elect, plan to work with executive board members to refine the program next year and provide opportunities for worthwhile experiences for veteran and new administrators.

Mary Kerns, OASS president, said her organization started an advocate program in late October. Regional people on the executive committee are in search of central office administrators and supervisors who are new in their region. The fledgling program is in place and is expected to grow next year. Kerns said, "We feel strongly that people in central office positions need support. There is not a lot of formal training available specifically for central office jobs. People kind of grow into them. We think that is a mistake. We feel a mentorship program really needs to be cultivated."

As the programs discussed in this Bulletin demonstrate, mentorship can be structured in a variety of ways to meet the needs of aspiring and newly hired administrators. Providing support in an explicit way with a formal mentorship can be an excellent way to orient aspirants, socialize new administrators, and improve practicing administrators' performance. Next, conclusions and recommendations are offered for districts or professional organizations interested in designing a new or refining an existing mentorship program.

Chapter 4

Conclusion and Recommendations

Principals report their jobs are fraught with interruptions, crises, variety, and uncertainty.

> One task is hardly begun when another task intrudes upon the scene. Fragmentation is an impediment to learning-from-experience. One can imagine the difficulties for surgeons if they had to learn how to take out an appendix based on the observation of 40-50 separate views of the operation each interrupted by pressing demands for other surgery. (Peterson 1985)

A recent study shows that principals are interrupted 1.7 times for every task they begin (Kmetz and Willower 1982). If they are interrupted almost two times on each activity, no wonder principals, particularly those new to the job, feel a sense of frustration and find difficulty connecting their learning. Superintendents and central office administrators are faced with similar frustrations in completing tasks.

In addition to the brevity, variety, and fragmentation of their activities, administrators feel they are alone with no one to talk to about the problems and issues they face. Frequently, new principals are hired, given keys to their building, and expected to be successful. Practica and internships help prepare administrators for their jobs, but those situations cannot compare with actually being in the role and experiencing the inherent responsibilities of the job.

Experienced principals who are hired into a new district face similar problems. They know what to expect, but need orientation to the new district's norms and procedures.

In both cases—first-time and experienced hirees—new principals are reluctant to ask questions of their colleagues because they may seem less than competent. They do not want to appear weak or ineffective to their staff

or other administrators. After all, they were selected to do the job because of their background, experience, and skills. Superintendents and central office administrators face a different dilemma. Because they are usually the only individuals in their districts who have those positions, they lack the option to check with colleagues in similar positions within their district. There is no one to help train them, orient them, or guide them through the maze of issues they encounter.

Historically, apprenticeships were recognized as a good method for passing along a skill or craft. Master craftsmen, through shadowing, questioning, modeling, challenging, and teaching, guided apprentices in their learning. Apprentices learned by a "hands-on" approach. Through a close working relationship the master and apprentice developed a bond that generally lasted for years. Those relationships are early forms of mentorships. Administrators report they learn best by practicing or learning "on the job." An apprenticeship-type structure is an appropriate way to increase their learning. Using a formal mentorship for administrative preparation and orientation is one way to structure an apprenticeship situation.

With approximately 50 percent of the school administrator work force turning over in the next three to five years, veteran administrators are concerned about passing along their craft. One way these administrators can transfer their knowledge is to establish a relationship with a mentee. Informal mentorships among administrators have existed for years; now school organizations are focusing on formal mentorships as a way to provide support for new administrators in their districts.

Formal mentorship programs—an extension of the apprenticeship concept—are beneficial to the proteges as well as the mentors. Those programs increase opportunities for underrepresented groups to learn about educational administration and to have access to jobs in the profession. They also help aspirants and newly hired administrators more easily and effectively learn the complex roles of administrators in public schools. Having someone who is in a similar position with whom to share reflections increases the chances of success for any aspirant or newly hired administrator. In the words of one mentor, "Anybody needs a mentor."

The Oregon programs discussed in this Bulletin operate within a variety of structures. Each program was designed to meet the specific needs of new or practicing administrators in its organization. Some traits common to all the programs should be considered in establishing a formal mentor program for an organization or school district. The following recommendations draw attention to the major characteristics of these successful programs.

1. Establish a plan for the program. Time should be spent planning and organizing the formal program before implementing it. For the program to be more successful, support from top-level administration is important. Including a mentorship program as part of an orientation or larger professional development program is a good approach to increase acceptance of the idea by principals and central office administrators. Establishing the mentor-

ship program separate from administrative evaluation is critical. Proteges should not feel threatened by confiding in their mentors.

2. Develop goals and objectives. Mentorship programs are more successful if there are at least some loosely structured guidelines. District officials need to communicate whether the program is for exposing aspirants to administrative positions and responsibilities, for orienting newly hired administrators, for providing professional development, or for some combination of those objectives. Mentors and proteges in a formal program function better together when expectations and responsibilities are clearly outlined. Information about the period of commitment and the suggested number and duration of meetings can be included in the guidelines to help mentors and proteges plan their time together. Options can be provided in the event the mentor and protege find their match is unsuitable.

3. Identify mentors and proteges. Once the goals, objectives, and scope of the program are defined, qualifications can be established for the mentors and proteges. Voluntary participation is recommended to ensure a successful relationship. School districts have the option to use indistrict veteran administrators, practicing administrators in neighboring districts, or retired administrators. Possibly two districts could establish compatible programs and exchange mentors. An advantage of using retired administrators is that they have knowledge about a district's history, policies, and procedures, but are removed from any evaluation process. Retired superintendents can provide an excellent support system for new superintendents.

4. Conduct an orientation for mentors and proteges. To encourage active participation in the mentorship program, an orientation session should be held for mentors and proteges. The orientation should include a review of the goals and objectives of the program along with the responsibilities and expectations of the mentors and proteges. A list of suggested activities and situations could be included. There should be enough flexibility in the program to give pairs an opportunity to become acquainted and build confidentiality and trust. Individual plans should be outlined to meet the needs of each protege. Also, it is a good idea to encourage the pair to keep a private journal to help them reflect on their experiences and activities with each other.

5. Provide resources for the program. Districts with limited resources need to be creative in finding a way to compensate participants. A mentorship is an excellent way to use retired administrators who owe the district some time. Reimbursing a practicing administrator on a per diem basis or with compensatory time are other ways to support the program. If possible, release time should be arranged, especially for teachers aspiring to administration who are working with a practicing administrator.

6. Develop a feedback system for monitoring the program. (This is not to be confused with evaluating individuals.) Some type of reporting of information back to the district is essential to make sure the program is accomplishing its goals. A midyear report or check should be done to make

sure the mentor and protege are meeting and that their relationship has not encountered major problems. Possibly the mentor and protege could cooperatively write both a midyear and final report about the types of activities they found successful and whether or not the program structure helped them meet goals they established. The report could include suggestions for refinements if appropriate.

The structure of a formal mentorship program can take many forms, as the examples in this Bulletin show. Whatever structure the program takes, vital ingredients are confidentiality and trust. Without those two characteristics, a mentor relationship will not flourish. Developing a mentorship benefits the individuals involved, the district, and ultimately the students they serve. Exchanging ideas, providing support and guidance, and reflecting on situations and decisions in a mentorship will help improve the skills and craft of administrators who will lead our schools into the twenty-first century.

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